



Faculty Workload Distribution Guidelines

FALL 2025

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Contributions to this guidance include faculty workload guidelines from the University of Arizona College of Engineering (2024) and former School of Information (2023).

1. Background

As a large College, we anticipate and celebrate faculty colleagues engaging in a wide variety of activities. Individual units have more specific (but highly varied) norms and expectations about depth of productivity from a host of perspectives (social scientist, humanist, scientist, etc.). Each unit shares with the Dean's Office their unit-specific guidance and any updates should be shared with Faculty Affairs when they occur.

The following faculty workload distribution guidelines for all faculty tracks in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences aim to support equitable annual faculty workload assignments. This guidance was reviewed and approved over the course of the 2024-2025 academic year and fall 2025 semester by the elected SBS Faculty Advisory Council, SBS Heads and Directors, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Advancement, and the SBS Dean. There may be some variation among programs and units, depending on grant activity or other approved arrangements. Any adjustment of assignment within the three primary areas: research and creative activity; teaching and student mentoring; and service/outreach/leadership are determined at the unit level as recommended by the Head or Director in consultation with the Dean and approved by the Dean. Guidelines are calibrated to typical College workload standards.

2. Workload Assignment Process

When is workload assigned, how, and by whom?

In general, SBS faculty receive a workload assignment when they are hired by the Head/Director of the school/department, which follows closely with the College's typical faculty workload distribution for the track in which they have been hired. Each year, faculty confirm and sign their workload for the upcoming year after the annual review (before the end of the spring semester). Nontypical workloads are sometimes the case during professional development leaves, administration leaves, sabbatical leaves, administrative work taken on, sick or Family Medical Leave, or other circumstances requiring temporary modification.

How are disagreements resolved?

The College has a process for appealing faculty workload distribution assignments if resolution is not reached between the faculty member and Heads/Director. At the time of the Annual Performance Review, SBS faculty and Heads/Directors agree upon the workload distribution for the upcoming year, and the faculty member signs off on the workload. Generally, requests for deviations from the College's Workload Distribution for tenure track, continuing status and career track faculty are discussed between the faculty member and the Head/Director during the annual personnel review. In the College of SBS, the current workload distribution appeals process is as follows:

- The appealing faculty member sends a formal email to their School Director/Department Head, stating that they intend to appeal to the Dean.

- In the appeal letter email to the Dean, the faculty member should justify the requested workload change that would deviate from the College's standard workload distribution for tenure-track, continuing status and career track faculty.
- The Dean will weigh the appeal in consultation with the School Director/Department Head.
- The Dean will notify the faculty member of the decision by email.

3. Workload Distribution

As a College situated in a research-intensive university and being an Association of American Universities (AAU) institution, research for tenure-stream faculty carries importance. Thus, tenure-track faculty follow more rigid workload percentages than faculty in other tracks. The position expectations of Continuing Status faculty and research professors vary widely depending on the area in which the faculty member is based. Professors of Practice, whose workload typically has an emphasis on teaching, also have a wider variety in their workload distributions, based on service and administrative expectations. Instructors typically dedicate all or nearly all of their time to teaching.

Typical faculty workload distributions in the College are as follows:

- **Tenure-track:** 40% Research, 40% Teaching, 20% Service
- **Continuing Status** (non-administrators): 20-60% Research, 0%-40% Teaching, 20-60% Service
- **Research Professors:** 30-100% Research, 0-25% Teaching, 10-20% Service
- **Professors of Practice:** 0-20% Research, 60-80% Teaching, 20-40% Service
- **Lecturers:** 80-100% Teaching, 0-20% Service
- **Instructors:** 100% Teaching

While these are acceptable ranges for workload distribution, decisions on faculty workload assignment are made by a department/school Head/Director in consultation with the Dean by May. Non-typical workload distributions and modifications vary and may include Family Medical leaves, sabbaticals, professional development leaves, Director/Head research leaves and other types of situational factors.

4. Guidelines

a) Research, Scholarship and Creative Work

Faculty with research assignments are expected to engage in research, scholarship, or creative activities that would result in peer-reviewed or juried outcomes with a proven record of impact and creation of new knowledge in the field (publications, creative endeavors, citations, awards, etc.).

Given the variation in disciplines across the College, research or creative work quality and productivity is ascertained through tenure and promotion, continuing status, or other guidelines and annual review guidance at the unit level, as norms vary depending on the disciplinary field, contexts for research, and methodologies utilized. Among metrics sometimes used for evaluation are impact factors of publications, acceptance rates, number of citations, h-Index, i10-index,

publication rankings, recognized jury processes, awards or other recognitions, audience, numbers of views, social impact metrics, invited presentations, guest journal issue editor in disciplinary area, among others. Federal or other grants can be weighted toward scholarly activity, depending on the grant award size and the extent that it is compatible with the unit, College or University's mission. Some units may elect to review an average of three years or more of faculty research or creative work to account for variation each year in related activity or progress on long-term projects. This would be noted in unit guidelines. Expectations for public scholarship / public scholarship activity should be clearly mapped out at the unit level.

Tenure-track and Continuing Status faculty members are considered to be **research active** when they engage in activities that support any combination of the following outcomes. Expectations for quantity and significance of various activities in relation to workload are determined at the unit level.

Completed Works

- Peer-reviewed publications or accepted for publication research or creative work: books, journal articles, scholarly book chapters, or published conference proceedings.
- Creative works: juried, curated, commissioned, or invited products, shows, or installations.
- Editorship of special journal issues or edited volumes.
- Other significant publications (not peer-reviewed): textbooks, policy papers, book reviews, encyclopedia or disciplinary or subfield handbook or companion entries.
- Technology transfer outcomes: patents, licenses, startups.
- Published data sets and related digital resources.
- Policy briefs and peer-reviewed reports.
- Grants awarded / sponsored research expenditures.
- Developing software for use in research.
- Public scholarship, including community-driven projects, based on academic research and referenced in unit guidelines. This publicly engaged scholarship would address practical issues and generate new knowledge.
- Public scholarship, including projects for businesses industries, trade associations, or community groups generating new knowledge to address practical problems, and referenced in unit documents.
- Presentation of conference papers.
- Award/s of minor grants.
- Invitations to present one's work at other institutions or professional meetings.
- Organizing conference panel/s.
- Revised edition of a book or textbook.

Works in Progress

- Manuscripts under peer review or in revision.
- Manuscripts in development.
- Grant or fellowship proposals submitted.
- Data collection or other primary scholarly activities in advance of dissemination.
- Technology transfer in progress; IP disclosure.

- Submission of creative work for refereed review.
- Ongoing public scholarship (defined above)

Adjustment to Research Workload

Faculty research workload may be adjusted on an annual basis with approval of the unit Head/Director and the Dean, under certain circumstances. For example, research workload may be temporarily *increased for*:

- Grant-funded buyouts of teaching or service effort
- Sabbaticals and prestigious, externally supported, research assignments
- Course reductions related to faculty recruitment and retention
- Endowed or named chairs whose terms carry workload adjustments

Research workload may be temporarily *decreased* to accommodate extra teaching, service or administrative assignments.

In certain circumstances, flexibility will be permitted in workload distribution for senior faculty with demonstrated teaching excellence (tenured and continuing-status faculty who are Associate Professors or Full Professors) to be considered for a higher teaching assignment and reduced research assignment with corresponding adjustment to their workloads.

Faculty in Non-Tenure-Eligible Roles

Career-track research professors will have primarily research-oriented workloads. In SBS, these positions are typically supported by sponsored projects. Research expectations will align with meeting the objectives of their sponsored project portfolio.

There are no institution-wide expectations in the areas of research, scholarship, and creative activities for other non-tenure track or non-tenure-eligible faculty. However, non-tenure eligible faculty may have some formal assignment for research, if agreed upon by the Head/Director. These situations depend on unit/College needs and priorities.

b) Teaching and Student-Related Activities

SBS College faculty have varying teaching assignments based on their track and the needs of their unit and program.

- **Tenure-eligible (TT) and tenured faculty** generally have a 40% teaching load with some exceptions.
- **Continuing Status (CS) faculty** tend to have a lighter teaching load (higher research and sometimes higher service/outreach) and this varies.
- **Career track (CT) faculty:** The College has four career tracks, three of which largely focus on teaching: Professors of Practice, Lecturers, and Instructors. Research Professors (Assistant, Associate and Full Research Professor) are largely grant funded. Teaching for most CT faculty represents 60% to 100% of a career-track faculty member's work percentage. Teaching and

student-related activity assignments begin at a baseline of:

- 80-90% (24-27 course units per AY) to 100% (30 course units per AY) for Lecturers and Instructors
- 60% (18 course units per AY) to 80% (24 course units per AY) for Professors of Practice, with service for most, and administration for some career-track faculty. Based on need in the unit and forecasting, Heads and Directors assign work distribution within the guidelines.
- 0-25% Teaching (varies from zero to two and a half courses, depending on grant funding)

In the College, a three-unit lecture or laboratory course with the minimum required number of students is a 'standard course' and represents 10% teaching. The College of SBS has set minimum course enrollment numbers as follows:

- *500 and above: 5 students*
- *400-499: 18 students*
- *399 and under: 18 students*
- *400/500: 5 graduate students or a total of 14 students*

An increase or decrease in a teaching assignment may be made in consultation with the unit.

Faculty are expected to teach as assigned. If an unexpected circumstance arises, faculty should immediately discuss this with unit leadership.

Faculty in SBS with teaching responsibilities in their appointment are expected to teach at least one course per academic year, unless they are on leave for the entire academic year.

Faculty may not use grants to buy out 100% of their teaching in an academic year.

Though service is considered a major aspect of professional life as a faculty member, a limited number of roles may have a reduced teaching load. Directors of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, overseeing accreditation reports/visits or a major role in a program, may receive a course reduction, depending on the size of the program/s or oversight and if the time involved clearly exceeds faculty members' service assignment, which ranges, generally, from 10% to 40%.

In consultation with the College, an increase, decrease, or other adjustments in a teaching assignment may include, but is not limited to, the following factors:

- Course coordination across multiple sections while considering Graduate Assistance or other assistance
- New course preparation
- Significant course re-design efforts aligned with institutional pedagogical initiatives or requests (e.g. hybrid or online models for general education requirements to serve more remote and distance students)
- Course buyouts through a grant
- Large courses (established by unit in consultation with College)
- Reduced Ph.D. student admissions (affecting ability to achieve enrollment minimums in 600 level courses)
- High numbers of MA capstones, projects, and/or theses supervised (example: these could be bundled to constitute a "course")

Faculty with teaching assignments may be expected to:

- Develop new courses
- Teach lecture, lab, seminar and/or workshop courses
- Supervise capstones, theses and/or dissertations
- Provide supervision, mentoring, and advising for grad students

Student Supervision, Mentoring, Advising for Graduate Students

This responsibility is available for all qualified faculty with disciplinary expertise and/or active research agendas, as workload allows. These activities are an important component for faculty in units offering graduate programs. In addition to variation by unit, there may also be differences in the extent of graduate student supervision among faculty within a unit and over time. Variation may be accommodated within.

c) Service, Outreach and Leadership

University, College, unit and professional service assignments begin at a baseline of 20% for tenure stream faculty. Continuing Status faculty have up to 60% service/outreach commitments and Professors of Practice tend to be on a 20% to 40% service commitment. Research Professors range from 10-20% service assignments. Lecturers range from 0-20% service assignments in most instances.

Formal service effort includes essential or necessary activities and contributions as determined appropriate by the unit and College. Approved service may occur at any of the following levels:

- Unit: program, department, school, center, institute
- College
- University
- Professional or disciplinary organizations
- Community engagement benefiting from a faculty member's disciplinary or professional expertise. This work includes:
 - Applied research or other projects for non-profit, other community entities, government or industry
 - Supervision of student-led community-focused projects
 - Formal pro bono consulting related to disciplinary/professional expertise
 - Service on boards or significant contributions to other formal organizations related to expertise or unit/college community activities

Community activities of a personal nature, such as service on a PTO/PTA for a child's school or coaching a little league, will not be considered service toward workload distribution or annual performance reviews.

d) Administrative positions

The College has specific workload distribution guidelines for SBS Heads and Directors. The "SBS Head and Director Responsibilities" document is on the [Faculty Affairs and Advancement](#) webpage under '[Timelines, Guidelines, and Forms](#)' and 'Heads and Directors.'